

**THE CALIFORNIA AVOCADO COMMISSION SUBMITTAL
IN SUPPORT OF THE PETITION FOR TEMPORARY URGENCY CHANGE
PUBLIC HEARING ON FEBRUARY 17, 2009**

My name is Ann Grottveit, I am an attorney with the law firm of Kahn, Soares & Conway. Our firm is general counsel for the California Avocado Commission and I appear today on their behalf. The Commission supports the Petition for Temporary Urgency Change. The Commission also supports the California Department of Water Resources and the United States Bureau of Reclamation's request to waive specific starting gate provisions and flow requirements described in the supplement to the Petition.

The Commission, formed in 1977 as an entity of state government, engages in advertising, promotion, production and marketing research and the dissemination of crop information for the estimated 6,000 growers in the state. Avocados are grown along California's Central Coast to San Diego County and the estimated farmgate value of the crop is \$350 million.

The worsening water conditions across the state coupled with the restrictions on Delta water export pumping have caused California avocado growers, desperate for water, to stump more than 4,000 acres this year. Stumping, as evidenced by the photographs submitted, is the act of cutting avocado trees at 3 to 4 feet then immediately whitewashing the stumps to protect from sunburn. This allows trees to regenerate, initially using minimal water, which increases as trees re-grow and return to production approximately three years after stumping. Avocado growers have taken this action with the hope of accessing adequate water in the future. Until then, this lost acreage will result in a loss of home grown production. Mexico, Chile and Peru will be happy to fill this market void. Ultimately this means more lost jobs for the state.

If this problem is not addressed immediately, additional acres will be stumped this year. Because it will be at least three years until these stumped trees can become productive, without additional water this cycle continues, reducing local avocado production and extending the economic impact to the state.

We are hopeful that the relaxation of the Delta water export pumping restrictions will provide supplies of water vital to avocado growers in the southern coastal portion of this state. Permitting the Delta outflow modifications gives the hope of relief to California avocado growers already in the midst of a deep recession and severe drought. The Commission thanks the Board for its consideration of this vital issue.